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THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGY

Founded by G. STANLEY HALL in 1887.

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EDITORIAL.

When the AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGY was founded in 1887, it was a pioneer in its field. It represented the department of psychology at the Johns Hopkins University, was for years the only one of its kind in the country, and the establishment of which, as its subsequent history shows, was one of the boldest and most sagacious as well as one of the most successful and beneficent steps ever taken by this leader of the new academic movement. Here vigorous and creative minds like Cattell, Dewey, Jastrow, Donaldson, Cowles, C. L. Franklin, Hodge, Burnham, Patrick, Noyes, Nelson, Motora, Stevens, Edwards, and others, all of whom have enriched the department by original contributions in the JOURNAL, received, some a part and some all, of their special training. There was almost no outside aid, and for years practically no competition in any land or language. For years the struggle for existence was severe, and the editor himself did a good part of the review and other unsigned work, and made good the large annual deficit from his own pocket. Since moving to Worcester the JOURNAL has depended for original articles largely upon members of Clark University, men already prominent or promising in professional position or productivity, like Franz Boas, A. F. Chamberlin, B. I. Gilman, B. C. Burt, Alfred Cook, C. A. Strong, A. MacDonald, Le Rossignol, W. L. Bryan, T. L. Bolton, Frederick Tracy, W. O. Krohn, Gerald M. West, A. H. Daniels, E. W. Scripture, Herbert Nichols, Alexander Fraser, F. B. Dresslar, John A. Bergström, Frank Drew, J. H. Leuba, H. T. Lukens, Colin A. Scott, G. W. A. Luckey,

G. E. Johnson. Under the influence of these men departments of experimental psychology and laboratories were founded at Harvard, Yale, Philadelphia, Columbia, Toronto, Wisconsin and many other higher institutions of learning; text-books have multiplied; other workers no less able who were trained abroad and elsewhere have come into the field; psycho-physics, neurology, the psychology of the insane, criminals, blind, deaf, idiotic and other defective classes, studies of animal instincts, anthropology and childhood, which the JOURNAL was the first to make it a leading purpose to bring out of their isolation into fruitful reciprocity,—have been well coördinated and other periodicals established. The JOURNAL invited and presided over the establishment of the American Psychological Association, which is the first organization in the country in which teachers of psychological and other philosophic subjects, who in the past have found it difficult to co-operate, have been united and felt some degree of *esprit de corps*.

It is now because recent developments enforce the necessity of defining and emphasizing anew a standpoint which is scientific, without mystic infiltration, unitary enough not to mix the most opposite tendencies in rococo confusion in the same journal and even text-books, and American in that instead of mere discipleship to past or present leaders, or excessive deference to European thinkers, it is clearly seen that our own country is in dying need of a science of man larger than any or all of the systems, that the AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGY, instead of lapsing, as it might well do after such service, to become the organ of one laboratory, takes up again its task, which is far harder even than before, but with greater resources and a settled conviction that the immediate future will see yet greater changes than the past, year for year, and with even greater courage and ardor than when it first started.

From the first the JOURNAL has slowly and steadily grown and now pays all its expenses, and with the present number begins changes and improvements along the following lines:

- I. Several slight modifications in form.
- II. A new department of notes, to which contributions are invited.

III. An international corps of editors and contributors, who will contribute and write reviews.

IV. An improved method of finding and obtaining IMPORTANT literature on the lines defined below, and of having it promptly noticed, digested or reviewed, so that our Review Department be not limited to what publishers choose to send.

Our suggestion to our reviewers is to make each review a miniature of the original, embodying its every new and salient phrase and idea, but boiled down to the utmost consistency, appending criticism, if any, in a final paragraph. This work is often so poorly done that the services it may render are but little known. These digests should be more *striking* than the original itself, where transitions are more gradual, the whole not seen in all its proportions at once. It is believed that publishers and readers alike will welcome this method.

V. Exclusion of all advertisements whatever, save occasional friendly exchanges with other scientific journals in cognate lines. By thus admitting between our covers only such titles among the vast mass of publications as we deem most worthy the attention of our readers, our reviews may perhaps be kept more impartial.

VI. A sharply defined field for both articles and reviews as follows :

I.

The results of experimental investigations in psycho-physic laboratories. To this *Archiv* function, not yet represented by any serial publication in this field in English, we are ready, if fit matter be forthcoming, to give most space, and should be glad to become the organ in which any American laboratory can be sure of publication in the order of its reception of any contribution of the methods or results of original research that is both new and important, and to print memoirs of greater length than has been possible hitherto, up to the utmost limits of our practical resources, provided, always, that there is the greatest practicable condensation and elimination of excessive discussion and unimportant details, to which young investigators in this field are so prone. Prominent German experimenters have illustrated that there

is such a thing as over-production of statistical tabulation on the one hand, and a use of exact apparatus in a way so lacking in rigor and severity as to positively embolden the speculative propensities so inveterate in this field, while in this country much of the psychology of the last decade is by "arm-chair professors," who lack patience for the tedious details of laboratory research as well as the instinct for concentration and specialization that can focus their efforts upon anything less than the entire field of psychology. This JOURNAL desires to represent neither of these tendencies, nor the disposition, now also too rife in this period of rapid transition, to press imperfectly established observation into the service of old discussions concerning problems not yet soluble by science, such as epistemology, the nature of consciousness, the freedom and essence of the will, the ego, immortality, etc., or idealism generally, on the one hand ; or molecular tremors, phosphorescence, memory cells, chemical and electrical tropes by those who are neither chemists nor electricians, etc., or materialism generally, on the other hand.

II.

Studies in abnormal psychology, including the insane, criminals, idiotic, blind, deaf, or other defectives or degenerates. Here belong a large number of border-land phenomena not yet adequately represented in medical literature. Here premature conclusions, like the existence of a magnetic fluid, telepathy, spiritism, dream signs and prophecies, etc., which represent the largest number of articles thought by their authors to be psychological, but which the JOURNAL has had to decline, not purely because the bottom facts recorded were not of great interest and importance, but because the observation was utterly uncritical and distorted by crude superstition or crass theory on the one hand, and the Lombroso-Nordau tendency to find symptoms of disease or decadence in every exceptional trait or act, forgetting that the rough symptom groups found practical for the clinic are not the categories by which to diagnose the forces that make for higher human evolution and variation, on the other ; — all this, from the standpoint of the JOURNAL, is far less scientific

than work in the method and spirit of Kandinsky, Krafft-Ebing, Kräpelin, Magnan, Cowles, and others. We should prefer to print studies like those the latter is now making at the palatial new asylum at Waverly, which marks a new departure in the systematic observation and treatment of the insane by combining and embodying in practical form the best new tendencies in psychology. The JOURNAL also desires to stimulate the scientific study of the feeble-minded, paupers and under-vitalized classes, as well as that of the blind and deaf,—to say nothing of freaks, cranks and other exceptional persons generally, and is fully persuaded that this field, now almost entirely uncultivated, will yield a fruitage no whit less valuable than that of the new criminology, if cultivated with equal vigor and sagacity. In this field psychology cannot experiment, but nature does so on a gigantic scale all about us, and we should now try to gather more of the lessons from her vast experiment station.

III.

The anthropology of myth, custom, religious belief, symbols, etc., among savages and ethnic stocks ; rites, ceremonies and all products of the mythopoeic faculty, and all expressions of the religious instinct are so spontaneous and central that it is strange that modern psychology has so ignored them. The grand old cult sometimes spoken of as conversion, the new life, regeneration, which in the old American college was central in all instruction in ethics, and mental science, as it has been in some form for adolescence in every religion, savage or civilized, can only be rescued from its present degeneration by such studies. The JOURNAL holds that anthropological is, to say the very least, no whit less important than physiological psychology as an element of philosophical training. The deep psychological significance of myth, rite, ceremonial, symbol, etc., are also just being discussed, and can be explored and utilized only by careful study and research in general anthropology, which is expected at least in one American university of all psychological students.

IV.

Closely connected with the latter is genetic psychology and exact and careful child-study by scientific observers. This movement is so recent, and by methods so new, that American psychologists have little conception of its scope. Not only is it repeating, stage by stage, the history of the laboratory movement, but marking, as it does, the first advent at last of evolution in the study of the soul, it promises to equal the latter in importance, and relegate much of the present adult psychology to those pages of history which preserve the aberration and over-subtleties of vigorous but misdirected minds. The JOURNAL can only print the most exact and scientifically important researches in this field. For those of a more popular and practical nature, another journal has been especially established (*The Pedagogical Seminary*).

V.

Studies of animal psychology.

VI.

Neurological researches.

VII.

The psychology of philosophy, ethics, æsthetics, theology, etc. To the psychological treatment of subjects or persons in this field by the same objective and critical methods, as myth, art products, or other more naïve creations of the soul, are discussed from a more conscious and scientific standpoint, as the psychology of genius, childhood, insanity, instinct are studied, great importance is attached.

Thus the field of the JOURNAL does not include the history of philosophy, ethics, or pedagogy, for these topics are already adequately provided for in other journals. It does not include epistemology, metaphysics, sociology, or theology unless treated as above, nor offer to print long discussions concerning matters on which conclusions are impossible. The JOURNAL thus has a philosophical *standpoint* and *character*.